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STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL RETARDATION  
**DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL**  
ANDREW JOHNSON TOWER, 10th FLOOR  
710 JAMES ROBERTSON PARKWAY  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0675  
PHONE 615-532-8615 TTY 615-741-4562  
FAX 615-532-8964



January 28, 1997

Mr. William F. Canton, Acting Secretary  
Federal Communication Commission  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20554

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FEB 6 1997

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Mr. Canton:

I am writing regarding Docket No. 96045 (Universal Service) and the recommendation that long distance voice and data line connection charges between individuals with a disability working at home and their employer be waived. As bridges are being built into the 21st Century and the Third Wave of the Communications Era is cresting, individuals with disabilities must not be left behind.

The advent of telecommuting is a boon to both employers and employees. It is especially important for individuals with disabilities who have an unemployment rate of nearly seventy percent. The vast majority of these people want to work and many of them would be able to use assistive technology and telecommuting to be employed. However, the costs associated with telecommuting can be prohibitive when an individual is beginning from income based on Supplemental Security Income (SSI), for example.

The elimination of long distance telephone charges between a telecommuting employee with a disability and the employer will be a positive element in the effort of individuals with disabilities to enter the nation's workforce. Therefore, I am writing in support of, and urge you to adopt, the Federal-State Joint Board's recommendation as cited in the Universal Service cc Docket No. 96-45.

Sincerely,

Wanda Willis  
Executive Director

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STATE OF FLORIDA  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT SECURITY  
Division of Worker's Compensation  
Rehabilitation & Medical Services Unit  
First Union Bank Building  
444 Seabreeze Blvd., Suite 460  
Daytona Beach, Florida 32118  
(904) 254-3761  
FAX (904) 254-3767

January 31, 1997

FCC MAIL ROOM  
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William F. Canton, Acting Secretary  
FCC National Telecommuting Institute, Inc.  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of Docket No. 96-45 (Universal Service)

Dear Mr. Canton:

This letter is to support the proposal currently before the Federal Communications Commission that long distance charges be waived if the long distance connection is between a person with a disability working from his/her home and his/her employer. Doing so would facilitate the cost-effectiveness of a person returning to work who may currently be receiving disability benefits, and would facilitate the work of our department in the rehabilitation of an injured worker who may apply for services through our division.

The motto of The Department of Labor, State of Florida, is "Strength Through Diversity". Our goal is to utilize the talents and abilities of all persons who desire to work. Policies which encourage productive work by all individuals are positive and should be supported.

Sincerely,

  
Paisley Van Flenner, R.N.  
Barbara Carter, LMHC, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

BC

cc: Dr. M.J. Willard

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# CAPE ORGANIZATION FOR RIGHTS OF THE DISABLED

114 Enterprise Rd., Hyannis, MA 02601  
(508) 775-8300 / 1-800-541-0282  
(Voice/TTY)

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FEB 6 1997

February 3, 1997

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

Office of the Secretary  
1919 M Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20554

FOR MAIL ROOM

Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C.

In the Matter of Docket No. 96-45 (Universal Service)

Dear Mr. Canton:

It has come to my attention that the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service has recommended that long distance voice and data line charges between individuals with a disability who need to work from their home and their employer be waived. Eliminating long distance telephone charges as an obstacle for telecommuting employment is an important step in assisting individuals with disabilities affecting mobility, cognition, speech, sight or hearing to join the nations workforce. I am writing in support of the Federal-State Joint Board's recommendation and urge you to adopt same.

Sincerely,



Tom Driscoll  
CORD

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